# TASD Gifted Referral Process

In Tyrone Area School District, students can be referred for potential gifted identification in three ways – by teacher/staff, by parent/guardian, by district testing.

If a teacher/staff member or parent/guardian observes characteristics and/or academic/intellectual traits that lead them to believe a student may potentially be gifted, they can contact the Coordinator of Gifted Services (CGS), the child's teacher or school counselor, the building principal, the district's Special Education Director, and/or the district's School Psychologist. If they do not contact the GGS directly, the information from the referring party will be forwarded to the CGS.

Results of district testing, including benchmarking, progress monitoring, classroom assessments, and diagnostics can also result in a student being referred for potential gifted identification. Assessment results are shared with the CGS at data team meetings held three times a year at the K-8th grade level.

Additionally, each November the CogAt is used as a Child Find measure of all 2nd grade students. A committee comprised of the CGS, Special Education Director, School Psychologist, Elementary and Middle School Principals, and selected teachers review the results of that cognitive ability test (K-Bit2), along with all assessment data given at the beginning of the year through the mid-year point. Beginning, middle, and end of year assessments may include, but are not limited to: Acadience (DIBELS) Math and Reading, iReady diagnostic and benchmarks, Direct Reading Assessment (for all K students and select students 1-4), DAZE, writing sample, phonological awareness and phonics screeners, letters/sounds/sight words, IXL screener, PSSA longitudinal scores, and reading and math series content specific unit tests, summative test average (in lieu of overall grade in the class). Specific to potentially gifted students, the committee looks for students who are showing skills and knowledge beyond their grade level benchmarks, as well as students whose progress from beginning of the year assessments to mid-year assessments shows an ability to learn large amounts of material to a mastery level and at a pace that exceeds the grade level pacing. Depending on the data, students may be out-of-level tested in content areas to see how far beyond their grade level they are able to achieve.

Once a referral of any kind is made, the CGS begins the district's process for identifying potentially gifted students.

1) If not already done as part of a data team review, all current and past data is collected on the student to review for the indicators described in the above paragraph.

2) Within 10 days of referral, the Coordinator of Gifted Services (CGS) contacts the parents to explain the screening and evaluation process, and if not referred by the parents, the reason for referral. If the parents referred their child, they are informed that their child will complete the entire process of screening and Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) and a Permission to Evaluate is sent home; however, the CGS will contact them after the screening process to discuss the results of the screening. At that time, they have the option to rescind, in writing, their request for a full GMDE.

3) If the parents have not requested the referral and decline the student's participation, a waiver stating the reasons for the referral and the parent's decision to not move forward with the process is sent home for the parent's signature.

4) A parent input form is sent home to gather the parents' observations about developmental milestones, their concerns and goals for their child, and anecdotal information about their child's thinking.

5) A teacher input form is sent to every teacher who teaches the child. If the referral is prior to the first semester, the child's previous year content area teachers also receive a form. The form used is a Performance and Ability Indication Scale (adapted from Gifted Rating Scales by Pfeiffer and Jarosewich). This asks the teachers to rank the student as normed to the Top 1%, Top 10%, Top 25%, Top 50% of all the students they have taught in three areas: Intellectual, Academic, and Motivation.

6) The GCS meets with the student and explains the purpose of the testing to assuage any concerns the student may have before administering the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test - 2nd ed. (K-Bit2). If the student appears apprehensive, the administration is delayed until a parent can be contacted.

7) Once the KBIT2 has been given and scored, a committee meets to discuss all the data gathered about the student. This committee is comprised of the School Psychologist, the Special Education Director, the GCS, the Director of Curriculum & Instruction, the gifted support teacher for that grade band, and a regular education teacher who teaches the child. The committee looks for markers that the student may potentially meet the 3-prong criteria of Giftedness in PA.

8) If the committee sees any evidence that the student may need Specially Designed Instruction to achieve at least a year's worth of growth from their start point and/or displays cognitive, affective, or behavioral gifted characteristics, the parents are notified by phone call or letter that the student needs a GMDE, who will issue a

Permission to Evaluate.

9) If the committee does not see evidence of potential giftedness from the data gathered, the CGS contacts the parents to describe the findings, including next steps to meet the student's needs in the classroom (regardless of identification). If the parents have already requested an evaluation or request an evaluation at that time, the CGS explains the rights of the parents to continue with the process. The CGS then informs the School Psychologist's office to issue a Permission to Evaluate.

10) All steps of the process, and dates completed are tracked by the CGS.

A note about equity of identification –
Because different factors can mask giftedness, special consideration is given to the district's EL, minority, low socio-economic, and SPED populations for screening and identification. These populations may require testing accommodations, re-testing in the event appropriate accommodations were not provided at the time of district academic testing, classroom observation by the CGS, translated materials, multiple testing sessions, and/or any other provision necessary to get an accurate, unbiased look at the student's needs.

**How does TASD determine gifted eligibility (through multiple criteria) and need (based on academic strength) for potentially mentally gifted students (evaluation)?**

Once the *Permission to Evaluate* is returned, the School Psychologist administers a comprehensive battery of assessments, including individual achievement and cognitive assessments, to assess students via nationally normed, standardized assessments. Our School Psychologist uses the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test | Fourth Edition (WIAT-4) and the WISC-V Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children - Fifth Ed. She also uses the Gifted Rating Scales (standardized rating scales). Once the School Psychologist-administered assessments are complete, the School Psychologist contacts the participants of the *Gifted Multi-Disciplinary Team* to complete the *Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation* (GMDE). In Tyrone Area School District, much of the data that is part of the GMDE is collected during the screening step, as described in the above section. Additional input is received from parents and teachers, along with a review of records and the student's curriculum-based scores. The GMDT participants include the School Psychologist, the Director of Special Education (LEA rep), the gifted support teacher for the grade band, the CGE, grade level teachers, the parents, and the student. The GMDT

considers all parts of the GMDE and completes a *Gifted Written Report* to determine whether the student is gifted and in need of SDI. If the student is identified as gifted, the GIEP team writes the initial *Gifted Individualized Educational Plan* (GIEP), using academic strengths and instructional levels shown in the data collected to write goals. Once the GIEP has been drafted, reviewed, and accepted by all parties, a *Notice of Recommended Assignment* (NORA) is signed and implemented within five days (if the meeting was in-person, otherwise within ten days).